

BDR 46-483
Appropriation of \$500,000 to the Nevada Division of Water Resources
To Establish a Cloud Seeding Matching Fund

The Humboldt River Basin Water Authority (HRBWA) (organized in 1994 by the Elko, Eureka, Lander, Humboldt and Pershing county commissions) proposed during the June 12, 2014 meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Interim Public Lands Committee that a bill be drafted for consideration during the 78th Nevada Legislature appropriating at least \$300,000 to the Nevada Division of Water Resources to establish a 50/50 matching fund for cloud seeding projects in Nevada. During its August 28, 2014 work session, the Interim Legislative Public Lands Committee voted to request the drafting of a bill to appropriate at least \$300,000 for a grant or grants to support cloud seeding activities in Nevada, giving preference to grant applicants who offer matching funds. (BDR46 –483).

Nevada State funded cloud seeding programs began in Nevada in the 1980s with activities dating back to the 1970s; however, funding was suspended during the State budget crisis between 2007 and 2009. In the Humboldt River Basin, cloud seeding occurred most recently in the Ruby Mountains. Cloud seeding has also until recently been undertaken in the Walker River Basin. Both of these cloud seeding programs have been suspended due to lack of funding. The Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) funds an on-going program of cloud seeding in the Truckee River Basin. Cloud seeding is widely used in several western states including at least California, Idaho, Utah, Colorado and Wyoming.

As shown in the attached PowerPoint presentations, cloud seeding has been found to add appreciably to snow pack and snow water runoff. Runoff from said additional snowpack is available both as surface water and as recharge to groundwater aquifers.

Following action by the Public Lands Committee requesting BDR 46-483, representatives of the HRBWA, TMWA, Truckee Carson Irrigation District, Walker River Irrigation District, Pershing County Water Conservation District, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Central Nevada Water Authority and Carson Water Subconservancy District met via a series of teleconference calls to discuss the likely cost of cloud seeding projects in various Nevada locations. Proposals for cloud seeding activities were obtained from the Desert Research Institute and North American Weather Consultants. Based upon these estimates of cost and discussions among the stakeholders it was determined and reported to Legislative Counsel Bureau staff that a state appropriation of \$500,000 was required to establish a cloud seeding fund. With local matching funds of 50 percent, this level of state funding would enable implementation cloud seeding programs around Nevada totaling \$1,000,000. BDR 46-483 is being drafted to request \$500,000 in state funding to establish a cloud seeding matching fund.

Support for BDR 46-483 and the resulting bill to be introduced into the Nevada Legislature by the Nevada Board of Agriculture would be greatly appreciated.

For Additional Information:

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